

Heber Affordable Art Gallery Closing Up Shop



Kirsten Shaw

Courier Staff 7-12-00

Although she studied the composition of the subconscious at B.Y.U. rather than symbolism in Picasso's paintings, Lynette Livingston has always appreciated the arts.

The San Francisco bay area native would often peruse Park City's galleries, and this impassioned her to open a gallery catering to student and "unknown" artists.

"I've always been one to venture into art galleries, but rarely could afford to walk out with anything," said Livingston. "I had visited Heber's little old town village to sell my painted furniture, saw the vacant village and had an idea for this type of gallery."

She opened Art of the Earth in March of 1999, and attended Utah student shows to find work to fill her gallery. Livingston's goal was to showcase new artists, allowing their art to be appreciated at an affordable price. Art ranges from \$25 to \$1200, much less expensive than Park City competitors' shops.

Unfortunately, Art of the Earth's doors will be closing by July 29th, due to financial hardship.

Art of the Earth's oils, watercolors, acrylics, pottery, stained glass and sculptures attracts tourists, but rarely locals. So, Livingston, who comes from an entrepreneurial family, began offering art classes—watercolor, calligraphy, furniture painting, create-a-book, etc.—and the local response has been overwhelming.

Todd Orchard, a Provo graduate student of painting teaches multiple mediums in addition to selling his landscapes. Orchard's youth drawing classes were a hit.

"He did a fantastic job with the little kids," Livingston said. "He would have them sketch the train from our doorway far away, then have them sit on the train and draw details and texture."

The gallery also features Sean Diediker's symbolic Utah landscape oils and figurative pieces, as well as local artist Justin Kunz's illustrations of "Chronicles of Prydain", a renowned Lloyd Alexander series. Classes have been full, but art-work rarely sells quickly.

"It's been hit and miss," said the owner. "The reason it fails, when it does, is getting the word out."

Livingston says the concept of an affordable
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Mountain State Park to the Boulder Basin, just off Pine Canyon Road. Lunch will be served in a meadow surrounded by aspen trees and, best of all, the llamas will carry the lunch in their saddle bags.

The cost includes a narrative history of the area by George Hansen, long-time Midway resident, lunch, beverages, and a chance to hang out with some big hairy critters. The hike starts at 9:00 a.m. and should end in the early afternoon. The \$50.00 cost of the afternoon will go towards the improvements being made by Friends of the Wasatch Mountain State Park to the park itself. Bring hiking shoes, sunscreen and maybe even a light jacket. And call for reservations and/or information (reserve by July 13) at 654-1047 or (801) 272-6890.

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The Beverly Brothers, part of Jazz at the Junction, a free Friday night family concert at the Factory Stores at Park City. 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 15

Utah Symphony at Deer Valley with guest artists Maureen and Keith. (801) 533-6407 for information.

All the glitz, glamour, glory and, hopefully, scholarship money - Miss Wasatch County Scholarship pageant is tonight. The show starts at 7:00 p.m. at Wasatch High School. The pageant promised to open doors to continuing educational and career opportunities and offers a full-tuition scholarship, cash prizes and gives.

Junior Ranger Program at Wasatch Mountain State Park. Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. at the Visitor's Center. Call 654-1791 for more information.

Tasty treats with Llamas - let the big critters bring lunch. Lunch with the Llamas happens today at Wasatch Mountain State Park's Visitor Center. Llamas will provide the food (they'll be packing it), participants will enjoy a hike and a gourmet lunch. \$50.00 per person with proceeds going to improvements of Wasatch Mountain State Park. Bring comfortable hiking books or shoes and sunscreen and a light jacket. Call before July 13 for reservations - 654-1047 or (801) 272-6890.

Always...Patsy Cline at Park City's Egyptian Theatre. For tickets and reservations, call the Egyptian at (435) 649-9371.

Fiddler on the Roof at Sundance Summer Theatre. (801) 225-4100.

Kids kamp at the Kimball Art Center, taught by local Robin Freidman. Class features a hands-on approach to art, focussing on a variety of media an introducing students to new and exciting experiences. The class runs through July 20 - cost per child is \$75.00 for members and \$90.00 for non-members. Call the Kimball Arts Center for more information at (435) 649-8882.

Sunday, July 16

Sunday Community Church Series presented by Park City International Music Festival. Call (435) 649-5309 for information.

Every Sunday afternoon (weather permitting) from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sundance resort sponsors a free concert on the lawn. Everything from bluegrass to Celtic to jazz or country could be on tap. Through October. Today - Fire on the Mountain.

Midway musician Don Elliott plays every Sunday night at Sundance's Owl Bar, a private club for members. Call (801) 223-4222 for details. Remember to give the musician and that hot tamale of a bartender lots of dough.

Monday, July 17

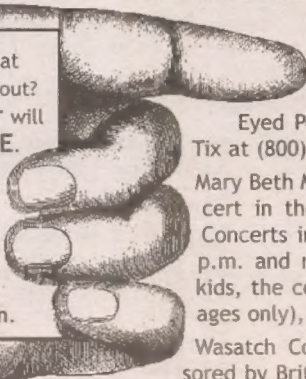
No Doubt with LIT and Black Eyed Peas at the E-Center. Call Smith Tix at (800) 888-TIXX for tickets.

Mary Beth Maziarz performs at the free concert in the park during the Heber Valley Concerts in the park. Shows start at 6:00 p.m. and run through 8:00 p.m. Bring the kids, the cooler (food and non-adult beverages only), and go nuts. Free.

Wasatch County Youth Soccer Camp sponsored by Britannia Soccer at Southfield Park,

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gallery is good, but it takes at least a three-year investment.

"It requires more money than I could afford to spend," she said.

She is talking to prospective buyers, and hopes the gallery remains open, but said better signage, lighting and more aggressive advertising is necessary.

Livingston, who initially wanted to open her gallery on Park City's affluent Main Street, has a new appreciation for gallery owners.

"I used to think they were ripping us off," she said. "But they pay about \$40,000 annually for rent in Park City. I don't think any gallery makes much profit. If you love it, it's fun anyway."

Heber's rent is approximately 90 percent less than Park City's, according to Livingston. She said that other dealers are struggling too, yet added that Heber's growth has attracted homeowners looking for local decor. Livingston said the gallery, especially its classes, could continue to do well if the purchaser was willing to invest time and money.

Prior to starting Art of the Earth, Livingston performed odd jobs in Park City—assembling ski poles, pulling staples out of street posts—and thought as a gallery owner she couldn't earn less. She laughs about that now. Livingston is sad to sell the gallery, and said she has a loyal local following who hope the gallery remains in business, yet she is excited for her future.

The psychology graduate, who had dabbled in graphic design, is returning to California to study at San Diego's art institute.

"I decided instead of watching everyone else do their work, I would learn how to do my own," she revealed.

Would she do it again? Yes.

Art of the Earth has removed its commission and is selling work at cost. "I want to do this for the artists," Livingston remarked. "Most of these guys are students and they get so excited when a piece sells."

However, prospective buyers may find a few pieces missing; Livingston grabbed a couple for herself. **W**

On yes, it's here, too. We both are, not out of our own choice, but out of the choice of a broken down Jeep, a never-mailed renewal check to triple-A, and a mechanic who smelled desperation the minute we said we need to get the Jeep back to Midway.

So while the Jeep gets a \$500.00 jump start and we hold the complementary beeper for them to tell us when it's time to be gouged, we walk across the street to some lame-o festival, thinking we'll eat some greasy food, look for the requisite funnel cake, listen to some not-ready-for-Tabernacle choir, and maybe win a couple of goldfish in baggies that won't last past tomorrow noon, all while wishing for even a glass of fermented Welch's grape juice (tell me the boredom that is Provo wouldn't drive even the most pious to drink, not that we're the most pious, but it sounds good), when we literally stumble on them—live sex acts in Provo.

"All right." I think that was my boyfriend's reaction. My reaction is a little more guttural, probably an, "Oh my," as I try to keep my grasp on my baggie o' goldfish. G-movies, Osmonds, and the only Einstein's Bagels on the planet closed on Sundays, that's what I expect to stumble onto in Provo. Not dirty movies, tatoo parlors, Paul Reubens, George Michael or live sex acts in some public park.

"Pee Wee Herman? Where?" my boyfriend asks, looking around. Okay, so I exaggerated about a few things. First, no celebs are in the crowd. And second, they're not really live sex acts, but for a town that frowns on premarital, um, test drives, a couple of conservative kids looking like a Twister game without the board is pretty close to a public display of "the act" or "the deed" or whatever you want to call it. And regardless of its technical G-rating, I don't approve. I have to say something.

"Leave them alone," says my boyfriend.

"Oh, oh I don't know. I'm not sure I can do that," I say, pulling out a 20; at least wanting to hit them with the cliché "Get a room."

"They didn't bother you," he says.

"Well, yeah they did. I don't want to have to watch that. They're not even graceful or well-practiced. They're probably killing the grass. And maybe they did bother me. Maybe they cut me off in traffic or something, bought the last funnel cake, or maybe one of them rang my doorbell, asking me if I've heard the other test..."